

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

General

1. *What is the VITA Grant Program?*

In December 2007, Congress appropriated funds to the IRS to establish and administer a one-year matching grant program in consultation with the Taxpayer Advocate Service, for Community Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). The program shall provide direct funds to:

- Enable VITA programs to extend services to underserved populations and hardest-to-reach areas, both urban and non-urban
- Increase the capacity to file returns electronically
- Heighten quality control
- Enhance training of volunteers, and
- Significantly improve the accuracy rate of returns prepared by VITA sites

2. *Is there a minimum or maximum award amount?*

No. There are no minimum or maximum award amounts; however, there is a matching requirement on a dollar-for-dollar basis for any funds requested.

3. *How many awards do you anticipate granting? Is there an average award amount already determined?*

Since this is the first time a VITA grant is available, we have no historical data available to answer these questions. There is no average award amount determined.

4. *Where can I get information about the VITA grant?*

The Publication 4671, *Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Grant Program, 2009 Program Overview and Application Package*, is available on IRS.gov. Using the keyword search option available on the site, type in *Community Network* and then select it from the list displayed. Also, you may access the application from the www.grants.gov Web site as well. Use *VITA* as the search option.

5. *How much money will be awarded in grants?*

Congress appropriated \$8 million; however, IRS will use 7% for administration of the program. The remaining 93% or \$7.44 million will be awarded as grants.

6. *Could a non-profit receive both a TCE grant and a VITA grant?*

Yes, but not for the same service. They cannot co-mingle the funds and the services must be tracked separately.

7. *Are there any so-called re-granting requirements?*

Funds cannot be *re-granted*. That is to say, you cannot obtain funds and then issue a call for grant applications to disburse the funds. However, as a lead organization over a coalition or coalitions, you can disburse the funds to your members. These members and

the process of disbursement are required to be detailed in the program plan narrative.
NOTE: Monies can only be spent on those items deemed allowable, necessary and reasonable.

8. *May I submit an application for more than one filing season?*

No. At this time, it is a one-time opportunity for services to be provided during filing season 2009. IRS would like to continue the grant beyond this period, but it is not yet funded. If the grant program is continued beyond this one-time offer, we plan to consider multi-year grants.

9. *Do you know when and where the orientation meeting will be held? Can you provide more information on how to budget for this meeting?*

The orientation meeting is planned for December 4, 2008, in Atlanta, Georgia. See the instructions on the reverse of Form 13977, *VITA Grant Program Budget Plan*, for information on how to estimate the cost of the meeting.

10. *Will the orientation include e-file training?*

No. The orientation training will cover topics specific to the grant award, such as financial reporting and use of the Payment Management System for disbursements.

11. *How frequently will the FAQs be updated on IRS.gov concerning the questions received by the Grant Program Office?*

The Grant Program Office plans to post updated FAQs each week on irs.gov.

12. *If I have additional questions, who do I contact?*

You may send an email to the grant.program.office@irs.gov or call 404-338-7894.

13. *Does IRS have expectations of future funding? If so, will you consider multi-year grants of 3-5 years?*

IRS is hopeful that the VITA Grant will be funded in the future. If it is continued, the IRS will consider multi-year grant opportunities.

14. *Should a small local partner seek assistance in writing their application? Larger partners have a greater capacity and more experience in grant writing.*

Partners should decide if assistance is needed in writing a grant proposal. All partners will be given the same consideration as long as the package is complete. The partner should submit a package that follows the guidelines. NOTE: Costs associated with writing and submission of the application are not allowable.

15. *Is there an appeal process if a grant is not awarded?*

No.

16. Can you tell me what the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (used in conjunction with Form 424) is for the VITA Grant Program?

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA) for the VITA Grant is 21.003. You may also use the acronym "VITA" in the Grants.gov search.

17. How many people can an applicant send to the orientation/training for those awarded a grant?

According to Publication 4671 page 52, a maximum of 2 program administrators are allowed to attend the orientation/training session.